

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
FIRE ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT
October 2001**

OFFICE OF THE FIRE ADMINISTRATOR

Commission Office

The following items were discussed at the October 11, 2001 meeting of the Fire and Rescue Commission:

- The Commission was briefed on actions taken by the MCFRS in response to the events on 9/11/01.
- The Commission received a briefing on the Fire Administrator's proposed Capital Improvements Program (CIP) for FY 03-09.
- Approval was granted to relocate a boat from Sandy Spring Station 40 to Sandy Spring Station 4.
- Approval was granted to dispose of 3 brush trucks, 5 pumpers, 2 ambulances, 1 automobile, and 1 boat.
- Approval was granted to relocate an airboat from Glen Echo Station 11 to Cabin John Station 10, for the County to purchase a boat from the Glen Echo VFD (GEVFD) and assign this boat to the Cabin John Park VFD, and for the County to purchase a jon boat for the GEVFD.

On October 25, 2001, the Fire and Rescue Commission held a special meeting to discuss the proposed *Code of Ethics and Personal Conduct* Executive Regulation. Following extensive discussion, the Commission made several amendments and approved this Regulation.

Research and Planning

Emergency Management

Anthrax Response - In October confirmation of anthrax at the DC Brentwood post office, with resulting deaths of two DC postal workers, focused attention of EMG on county public health response. Dist. Chief Ey organized the anthrax hotline, originally set up in the EOC, and later moved to the Dennis Avenue Health clinic. Fire officers and health officials staffed the hotline. Gordon Aoyagi and county officials visited Shady Grove post office. OEM worked with the Information office to develop a two-sided card on disaster preparedness and bioterrorism response for the public. Efforts were organized for Cipro and other antibiotic distribution. Meeting held with seven of federal installations with post offices receiving mail from Brentwood. All in-county environmental screenings in October were negative for anthrax. EMG officials working with federal agencies, including Office of Homeland Security and FEMA to improve response efforts.

Community Outreach – OEM revised its quarterly Saturday October 28th Family Disaster Preparedness class to include information and citizen questions on government response to anthrax and other health emergencies. County Executive D. Duncan gave remarks and answered questions. Gordon Aoyagi and Ric Helfrich

highlighted the fire service and public health service responses. Meetings have been held with city councils from Friendship Heights, Somerset, and Town of Chevy Chase. Town meetings are planned for November through February in coordination with Lori Gillen of Executive's office, and Pete Piringer for fire and rescue. Mr. Duncan, Gordon Aoyagi, and public health officials have taken the lead in responding to citizen inquiries, and next meeting is November Olney Greater Civic Association. OEM provides a strong disaster preparedness message similar to Y2K town meetings. Next preparedness class will be November 28th.

Preparedness Brochures – Disaster preparedness and bioterrorism awareness brochures were drafted and will be mailed out directly to 350,000 households in November. The Information Office worked on seven (7) translations (1000 copies each). These will be available through the regional government service centers and Crisis Center, as well as by request.

Hospitals – The EMG Communications Committee met jointly with the EMG Hospital committee to discuss concerns about regional hospital communication strategies and technologies. DCHA had been contacting county area hospitals, as well as MIEMSS from Maryland when events occurred. The committee made recommendations for interim handling of area communication links until implementation of the 800 MHz. After business processes are reviewed at the county level, the committee will ask for COG to review regional efforts, looking at DC Hospital Association frequency, county Hospital Radio Net, and state EMRC. Prior to joint meeting, the EMG Hospital Committee met and agreed to apply for federal GETS cards (allowing priority access to telephones for disaster communications.) EMG Communications Committee under Dist. Chief C. Patullo will take the lead in reviewing options.

Annexes – EMG agencies forwarded comments to County Attorney and OMB for legal and fiscal impact review. Annex completion schedule postponed 60 days as county agencies focused on September 11th aftermath issues, except for terrorism annex which has proceeded on schedule. EMG agencies reviewing lessons learned from November 2000 bioterrorism exercise, and will include updates in 2002 Annexes and this year's EMG Work Program.

LEPC – Local Emergency Planning Council for Hazardous Materials held quarterly meeting and hosted Alan Williams from Maryland Department of the Environment to speak on Swanson Creek oil spill of 130,000 and role of National Response Plan. LEPC also had presentation by Bill Kelly, county Public Health, on planning for anthrax and infectious disease response as part of a coordinated EMG effort. Information on high profile chemicals collected in Hazlink database shared with Dist. Chief Geraci and Bomb Squad. County Police also were given copy of hazmat database as part of terrorism response efforts.

Terrorism Preparedness – EMG has scheduled a special meeting and training session for December 19th to highlight smallpox and other terrorist infectious disease mechanisms. OEM participated in updating the State's terrorism capability assessment.

Schools – Maryland Emergency Management Agency is working with all the counties to fund and distribute NOAA weather alert radios for public schools. If funding is available, state has offered to provide additional radios to private schools, on an as available basis beginning with largest facilities. OEM will coordinate distribution with public school safety office.

SAR Exercise – November 3-4 field statewide search and rescue exercise, held in Little Bennett Park, was success. Emphasis was on use of search dogs, command post operations, and communications. GWGVFD Junior Fire Brigade provided mock victims. EMG RACES and REACT volunteers participated with EMC-1 as Communications Command Post. County police and other agencies participated in two day weekend event with meals donated directly to volunteer organizations.

Taiwan Tour – OEM conducted a one hour class on the County's Emergency Operations Plan and then a tour of our EOC, 911 Center, and TMC for a delegation of Taiwanese on October 19th.

Community Education Safety Section

- Attended various Staff meetings.
- Replied, by phone or email, to 62 citizen, 55 FD, & 28 "other" (media, county gov't) inquiries.
- Met with various department staff and members totaling 11 hours.
- Composed various Memos and Safety Tips for dissemination to all work locations.
- Community Safety Education Steering Committee meetings. 1 hour.
- Scheduled various community education events and classes (12 hours).
- Dealt with various personnel and program issues relating to community safety.
- Various correspondences composed and disseminated. (8 hours)
- Conducted various Fire Evacuation Planning sessions for various High/Mid Rise Office/Residential, churches, and other 1-story buildings totaling IMPACTING over 42,000 people encompassing 43 HOURS.
- Reviewed bids, proposals, and rough draft's for various education literature and items. (1 hour)
- Pedestrian Safety Blue Ribbon Panel meeting proposal. 3 hours.
- Reviewed Fire Evacuation program for EOB (2 hours).
- Taped MCFRS Today video. (3 Hours)
- Operation Extinguish management. (2 hours)
- Various Fire Safety lectures, Health Fairs, Community Events, and Career Day presentations to various groups and schools by this office and some stations. 400 kids and 300 adults impacted.
- CPSS Tech's participated in several Car Seat Checks.

Corporate Development Services

Automation Section –

- Distributed the Fall 2001 county training schedule and provided an update on the County's e-messaging project.
- Responded to 17 data requests and worked with the County Attorney on and affidavit in response to a lawsuit.
- Participated on and attended meetings of the County's Technical Operation Managers Group, the E-Montgomery Users Group, the DCM Users Group, the EOC Automation Committee, the Mobile Data Help Desk Committee, the Mobile Data Network Committee, the Mobile Data Migration Committee and the Mobile Data Implementation Group.

- Did a crosswalk of the MCFRS legacy databases with the new RMS vendor.
- Coordinated and submitted the department's FY03 IT budget.
- Prepared the automation budget for FY2003.
- Responded to over 100 calls for hardware and software support.
- Distributed the latest virus signature files to stand alone workstation in the field.
- Conducted interviews for the vacant ASM I position.
- Prepared position descriptions for the 7 new automation positions, which were added to our FY02 budget.

Facilities-

- The Collapse Rescue Team storage building is essentially complete. Remaining issues include gas and electric hook-ups and inspections.
- Followed through with the Office of Management and Budget with issues relating to the FY03-08 Capital Improvements Program.
- Started the FY 03 operating budget process including enhanced facility improvement programs.
- The design for the replacement station for Silver Spring FS #1 is holding until additional design funding has been appropriated for the multi-use facility concept.

Fleet-

- Continued to work with the vendor to outfit one of the new Ford Expeditions to be assigned as a District Chief vehicle in the Bureau of Operations. The vehicle is expected to be completed in mid-November with the remaining four vehicles to follow.
- Work continued with the System Safety Committee, Apparatus Specifications Committee, and the vendor to resolve the safety-related issues of the electronic pressure governors.
- The Apparatus Specifications Committee is beginning to develop a specification for a midship mount aerial tower to replace AT-20.

Property Section-

- Met with representatives of Globe Firefighters Suits and the DFRS Safety Team to discuss numerous issues relating to PPE and to respective NFPA standards.
- Met with Office of Procurement staff to review responses for multi-agency IFB for uniform laundering and dry cleaning services.
- Met with Arch Wireless to resolve several administrative and technical issues relating to alpha-numeric paging.
- Processed 271 storeroom transactions.
- Assisted USAR MDTF1 with cleaning and repair process for PPE items and other equipment used at Pentagon deployment.
- Met with personnel who handle MCFRS courier program responsibilities to review precautionary measures due to recent terrorism involving mail and Anthrax.
- Coordinated process to complete accommodations to the PPE of 2 personnel.
- Prepared several FY03 operating budget enhancement requests. Met with CDS Section Chief and other staff to share and discuss enhancements from the various sections.

DIVISION OF FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

Bureau of Operations

Administration

Safety

A Collision Analysis Findings and Recommendations report has been delivered to the Fire Administrator. Coordinated by Bryan Raughley of Willis, this report took an in-depth look at the collisions for the past two years, attempting to determine root causes and provide recommendations to avoid them in the future. The report provides 14 recommendations for improvement. Assisting Mr. Raughley were Deputy Safety Officers District Chief Rich Bowers, Fred Enos and Captain Jeffrey Williamson; Todd Thompson of VFIS and A/C Roger McGary. Mr. Aoyagi has asked that the Safety Policy Steering Committee review the recommendations for potential implementation.

With support from the Fire Administrator Fire Station 17's floor has been refinished with a non-skid material. This has been the scene of numerous slips and falls due to its former surface.

Safety personnel assisted VFIS in development of a preventative maintenance training video. Portions of the video were shot at Rescue Company 1, Stations 6 and 17. A/C McGary provided VFIS with a training narrative. All stations in MCFRS were provided copies of the tape and training narrative.

Safety has been producing/distributing Lessons Learned as the result of various injuries and near misses. It is intended to produce Lessons Learned from fire, rescue, EMS and other incidents.

Following an incident in which AT18 sustained serious damage from an inadvertent activation of the tilt cab mechanism a survey was completed of all such equipment. Only one tilt cab could be accidentally activated and steps were being taken to secure the operating device.

Roto-Ray warning lights have been an issue for the past year. Several minor injuries have occurred when personnel operating at the front of a unit, were struck by the rotating light. In cooperation with the LFRD chiefs all that would not shut off when the parking brake was engaged were identified and corrected (or work orders are in place).

Safety is supporting an inventory system for all ropes in the MCFRS. This is the result of work done as part of a probationary package submitted by FP2 William Ivany, Station 14. District Chiefs have been encouraged to support this concept within their respective LFRD.

Specialty Teams

Collapse Rescue/Urban Search and Rescue

Metropolitan Medical Strike Team

Swiftwater Rescue Team

During the month of October, RRATS responded to two rescue/recovery incidents. One was the rescue of an individual who had been stranded on an island at night; the second was the recovery of the body of an individual lost in the river last summer.

The team was also called to provide maintenance services for a kayak race over Great Falls, and conducted maintenance service at one of the boat launches.

The team continued its regular monthly training, including nighttime evolutions on the water.

Bureau of Program Support Services

Administration

Communications

ECC conducted a tour of the Communication Center for representatives from four African Countries.

Five personnel completed EMD Quality Assurance Training Program

ECC Facts for the Month:

911 Calls Received: 10,762

911 Overflow Calls Received: 722

Administrative Calls In/Out: 22,758

Training

Recruit Class #20 members completed Essentials of Firefighting I and II and will begin Emergency Medical Technician-Basic class on November 8th.

Exams completed for Emergency Vehicle Driver Testing in October are:

Written 4

Practical 5

In-Service Training Program "Rapid Intervention Company Training" sessions were held in October with 69 DFRS students attending.

Three career and one volunteer EMT-Paramedics were awarded charge status in October.

Bureau of Life Safety Services

Administration

Fire Code Enforcement

Will be starting the ESCAPE inspection program for the holiday season.

Fire and Explosive Investigation

In October, Fire and Explosive Investigators investigated 9 accidental fires and 13 criminal fire related incidents. The Bomb Squad responded to a total of 260 explosive / suspicious package / letter incidents. The total estimated dollar loss for accidental fires was \$ 201,500 and \$ 281,050 for criminal fire related incidents.

The county suffered its fifth fire fatality during this month. The fire occurred in a high rise residential structure in a 7th floor apartment. The victim ignited her clothing while attempting to light a candle in the kitchen. She suffered third degree burns over 70% of her body.

The Investigation section has taken a lead role into the criminal investigation of hoax anthrax threats. Investigators are working closely with MCP and the FBI with regards to investigating these types of incidents.

CHIEF- DIVISION OF VOLUNTEER FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

- Welcomed Fred Welsh as the new Planning Manager for the DVFRS. Determined that T. Hale will provide his support needs.
- Attended the ceremony conducted by the CE and Council for the terrorist activities response
- Attended a Public Safety Committee meeting
- Participated in Mass Casualty and CISM training at the PSTA
- Worked with the Budget Officer, etc., on budget matters
- Attended a press briefing by the CE regarding the chem/bio situation
- Testified in a personnel matter
- Participated with the Fire Administrator and Chief Strock with the Howard Co. Fire Chief
- Participated in the annual Volunteer Awards Ceremony
- Attended the MD Metro Fire Chiefs meeting
- Participated in another preparation meeting for the upcoming 818 Roeder Rd. training exercise

- Attended a meeting with the CE and LFRD Chiefs regarding terrorism topics
- Attended the FRESH seminar at the NFA
- Attended the press briefing with the CE at the ECC regarding security concerns
- Attended a briefing by the CAO to the Council regarding the events on 9-11-001
- Attended a Safety Policy Steering Committee meeting
- Attended a training program at the EOC
- Attended Diversity Day in the EOB
- Participated in the annual Mont. Co. Vol. Fire – Rescue Ass’n. dinner and meeting
- Attended the DFRS promotional exercises
- Participated in a Unit Citation at Sta. 12
- Attended another meeting regarding the 818 Roeder Rd. exercise
- Attended a special meeting of the FRC regarding the Code of Ethics
- Attended the new Sta. 4 dedication
- Participated in another budget meeting regarding the DVFRS
- Met with the Fire Administrator, Chief Edwards, Chief Strock and Dep. Chief Bennett and their representative regarding various issues
- Attended the annual meeting with the COG Fire Chiefs and the General Manager of WAMATA
- Attended the Fire Board, Human Relations, Safety and Training, Fire- Rescue Association, Chiefs’ and Operations Committees meetings.
- Mediated personal, personnel and/or sensitive issues with various LFRDs, etc.

Planning Manager, DVFRS

- Attended new employee orientation.
- Visited ECC and EOC with Chief Jackson.
- Attended Unit Citation at Co.12 with Chiefs Dwyer and Strock.
- Attended Chiefs Council Meeting at PSTA with Chief Dwyer.
- Met with Kathy Stewart, Theresa Hale, and Darlene Flynn on the FY 2003 budget.
- Attended Sandy Spring Co.4 new station dedication.

- Met with Rich Riffe.
- Attended Mont/PG "Border" chief meeting.
- Attended planning session w/Administrator and operational personnel re: Contingency Planning for anthrax response.
- Made contact with Chief Hinde via telephone and at FRC meeting.
- Initial meeting with Chief Dwyer regarding direction for the Division.
- Attended initial part of FRC meeting on Ethics Policy.
- Attended Key Staff meeting on 10-29-01.
- Met with George Giebel
- Met with President Andy White, Chief Stanton, and Mike Kelley at Co.5.
- Attended initial part of the Community Chiefs meeting in Damascus.
- Attended Montgomery County Fair planning meeting w/Chief Ridgley.
- Attended initial part of FRC - HRST Committee meeting.
- Attended Military Chiefs mtg. @ Investigations.
- Continuing to schedule initial meetings with LFRD Chiefs and Presidents.